

While all these events were happening in the village, the Church at Shottesbrook, as it now stands, did not exist. There was a church at Shottesbrook in 1086, because the Domesday Book says of Shottesbrook [*Sotesbroc in Benes hd.*]:—"Ibi Ecclesia." The present Church, an ideal specimen of the Decorated style at the zenith of its beauty, was built in 1337 by Sir William Trussell, of Cubleston, shortly after he had purchased Shottesbrook Manor. It is the gem of this neighbourhood, if not of the whole of England, with regard to its shape and style amongst Parish Churches. I believe that when the interior of Shottesbrook Church was restored in 1852, fragments of Norman mouldings and arches were laid bare.

The etymological derivation of 'Shottesbrook' is as follows. It corresponds to an Anglo-Saxon form *Scottes brōc*; here *Scottes* is the genitive case of *Scot*, a man's name; and *brōc* means "brook." So it means 'the place near Mr. Shot's brook.'

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## The Stapleton Brass at Ipsden, Oxon.

*By J. E. Field, M.A.,*

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ONE of the most interesting of the palimpsest brasses of Oxfordshire is that at Ipsden. A description of it with facsimiles was given by Mr. Percy Manning in a paper on the *Monumental Brasses of the Deanery of Henley-on-Thames* in the *Journal of the Oxford University Brass-Rubbing Society*, I. 253, 254 (October, 1898), and it is described also by Mr. Mill Stephenson in his *List of Palimpsest Brasses in Great Britain* (1903), p. 145. The obverse represents "Master Thamas Englysche and Isbell his wyffe" both of whom "discesyd w<sup>th</sup>in on yere," 1525. On the

reverse of the male effigy there is the principal portion of a fine effigy of a lady, dated by Mr. Haines in his *Manual of Monumental Brasses* (which Mr. Manning and Mr. Stephenson follow), *cir.* 1420. On the reverse of the effigy of Isbell Englyscche is a large portion of a metrical Latin inscription of the same period. The above-named authorities read it as follows :—

. . . . uit S[ta]pilton (?) sponsa Johis  
 En Johñ morte ruit. heres tenerisq' sub annis  
 [E]t plures nati. pat' huc missale legavit  
 [S]int (?) xp̄o grati deus oiēs santificavit  
 . . . . . t.

The last word but one can only be *omnes*, in the contraction of which, as Mr. Manning points out, the engraver has blundered.

From this we learn that the person commemorated was the wife of one *John*, of whose surname only the initial letter and the feet of the others remain, but these are sufficient to show, almost beyond question, that the name was *Stapilton*. The verses state that John his heir died in his tender years, and several sons besides, all of whom had been christened ; and it seems to imply that none had survived. Also the father had bequeathed a missal to the church in which the memorial was laid. It does not appear that any attempt has been made to identify these persons.

Ipsden is about four miles south-east of Wallingford. At the period to which this brass belongs the manor of North Moreton, about four miles west of Wallingford, was held by the family of Stapleton. In 1295, Sir Miles de Stapleton had licence to found a chantry there and to endow it with twenty-two acres of land. This magnificent chantry, famous for its architectural beauty, its rich and curious angular piscina, and the original glass of its east window, still remains on the south side of the chancel of the parish church, and the land with which it was endowed is still called Chantry Piece. Three stone coffin slabs of the thirteenth or early fourteenth century, still lying before the chantry altar, are presumably those of the Stapletons or their connections ; but there are no later memorials of the family.

Sir Miles Stapleton, the first of the family who owned this manor, had a son Sir Gilbert, who again had a son Sir Miles. This second Sir Miles married Joan daughter of Sir Oliver Ingham of Ingham, Norfolk. They were of Bedale in Yorkshire, but from this time Ingham became the chief home of the family, a full

account of which is given in Blomefield's *History of Norfolk*. Sir Miles was one of the original Knights of the Garter, and died in 1364. In 14 Edw. III. (1340), says Blomefield (IX. 320), "he and Joan his wife settled by fine the manor of Ingham and the advowson on themselves in tail, remainder to John, son of Sir Miles, by [by is evidently error for and] his first lady Isolda, which John seems to have died *sine prole*." And in his notice of the Manor of Lammas in the same county Blomefield writes (VI. 290): "In 1350 Sir Miles Stapleton Knt. of Bedale in Yorkshire had it, and settled it on himself and Joan his wife for their lives, remainder to their son John and Isolda his wife and their heirs." We hear no more of this John. Sir Miles Stapleton, another son of Sir Miles, succeeded his father and died in 1418. He was succeeded by his son Sir Brian who died in 1438, and he again by his son Sir Miles who died in 1466. Each of these lords was buried at Ingham, and their fine series of brasses there, lamentably destroyed about 1800, is well known through the impressions taken by Craven Ord a few years previously which are preserved in the British Museum and of which reproductions were published in 1891 by Mr. E. M. Beloe of Kings Lynn in his *Series of Photo-Lithographs of Monumental Brasses in Norfolk* (Part III.).

Numerous Court Rolls of the Manor of North Moreton are in possession of Lord Aldenham, whose family owned it during part of the nineteenth century; and by the courtesy of the late Lord Aldenham the writer was permitted to examine them a few years ago. They include several of the first-named Sir Miles Stapleton, 1350-62, and also two of the last-named Sir Miles, 1446-8, but there are none of the intervening period, so that we get no light upon our subject from this source. But it may well be that John Stapleton lived here while his brother lived at Ingham, and there can be little doubt that the brass which is now at Ipsden is that of Isolda the wife of this John Stapleton. His brother died in 1418 (Blomefield, IX. 320), and the brass is exactly of that period. He himself left no issue, as far as Blomefield could ascertain; and the brass implies that all the children of the John Stapleton who is named in it died in childhood. Furthermore, there is every reason to think that the effigy of Isabel Englysche is cut out of the top part of the inscription, so that the fragmentary line which now stands first was originally first; and if this is so, the line must have contained the lady's christian name. Nothing could more exactly fit the size of the piece which has been cut away than the words, *Hec Isolda fuit*.

Thus we read the verses :—

This was Isolde, spouse of John Stapilton.

Lo, John their heir falls in death and in tender years,

And their several sons. Their father has bequeathed a  
missal here.

Be they pleasing to Christ : God has hallowed them all.

The question then arises, What was the Church to which the brass belonged ? It is most improbable that it would have been taken away and cut up for old metal in 1525 if it had been in the chantry at North Moreton. By the marriage of Elizabeth, daughter of the last Sir Miles Stapleton, with Sir Edward Howard, brother to the Duke of Norfolk, the manor had passed at this time to Thomas Howard, Earl of Surrey, in whose name Courts were held here in 1521, 1524 and 1525, and again, when he was Duke of Norfolk, in 1527 and the two following years. Thus the descendants of the Stapletons were still in possession, and might be expected to protect the family memorials. It is much more probable that the church in which the lady was buried, and to which her husband bequeathed a missal, was the priory-church of the Holy Trinity at Wallingford. The church of a neighbouring religious house was in those days a favourite burial-place for persons who had sufficient influence to obtain admission to it. The priory owned lands at North Moreton, and incidents of some interest occur in its relation to that manor as shown in the Court-Rolls. In 1356 the prior got into trouble with the lord of the manor by refusing to attend the manorial court, for which in 1360 he was fined 6d., and the next year he was ordered to appear and do fealty to the lord on the morrow ; but the rolls tell us no more of him or of his successors. The priory retained its estate here until the Dissolution, as appears by a grant of Henry VIII. in 1528 bestowing it, with other possessions of the priory, upon Cardinal Wolsey (Brewer's *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII.*, Vol. IV. pt. ii. No. 4471, cited in Hedges, *History of Wallingford*, II. 351, 352). William of Stevington (Steventon) was prior of Wallingford from 1358 to 1366 (see Hedges, II. 362) ; and the lack of deference which he shewed to Sir Miles Stapleton's court need not have prevented Sir Miles' son from using the priory-church as his family burial place half a century later when John Stoke was prior. Finally, it is a very significant coincidence that the priory surrendered to the King's Commissioners April 19th, 1525 (Hedges, II. 350), the same year that Thomas and Isbell Englysche died, for whom the brass was used again.

The plates were relaid in a soft stone about 1850. As the palimpsest character of the effigies was known to Mr. Haines, whose work on *Monumental Brasses* appeared in 1861, it may be safely assumed that there is nothing engraved on the reverses of the inscription and the shield, for these must have been seen at the same time. In consequence of the unsuitable nature of the new stone the effigies became loose again about twenty years after being relaid. They were refixed a few years ago with keyed screws under the auspices of the "Oxford Brass-Rubbing Society" (now the "Oxford Antiquarian Society"), which has done similar good work with interesting palimpsests in the neighbouring churches of Ewelme and Checkendon and elsewhere.

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## Notes on Stebenton, Berks.

by *Walter Money, F.S.A.*

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THERE is probably no sight which surprises a foreigner more on his first visit to England, and especially if he is one of our American friends, than the picturesque half-timbered houses which are still to be found in some of our old Berkshire villages ; not only on account of their old-world beauty, but as affording a valuable glimpse of the family life of the middle-class countryman in the days of our forefathers. Probably in no part of the country can be seen such delightful bits of half-timbered domestic architecture of the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries than in the now secluded village of Steventon ; although at one time it was one of the best known places on the Oxford and Southampton road, when the mail coaches daily rattled along its borders, after having passed the " Bay of Biscay," as the " Old Salts " used to term the bit of road over Ilsley Downs. Here can still be found a curious assemblage of primitive porches, antique roofs and gables, lattice windows and ancient doorways, all betokening the age when there was an abundance of oak in the country, and proclaiming the inherited dexterity of our village